

Breathing, Shortness of Breath

Dyspnea is a medical term for difficult or troubled breathing. You may hear it referred to as shortness of breath, hard to breathe, heavy chest or not getting enough air. This feeling of having difficulty breathing can be very scary and make someone feel anxious.

There are things that can be done to help when this shortness of breath feeling occurs.

ENVIRONMENT:

- Proper positioning by sitting upright and leaning forward slightly or standing and leaning forward slightly.
- Keep the room cool with circulating air (*use of a fan*).
- Make sure the area is calm and peaceful, allowing the person to relax.
- Stop any activity and rest.

BREATHING ASSISTANCE:

- If oxygen is being used, is it functioning properly?
- Pursed lip breathing (smell the roses, blow out the candle).

MEDICATIONS:

- Nebulizer treatment/inhaler.
- Anxiety medication.
- Pain medication can make it easier to breathe.

NOTES TO DISCUSS WITH THE NURSE:



Remember, Big Bend Hospice is here to support you. Call your Big Bend Hospice team if you have any questions or concerns at (850) 878-5310.